

Memorandum

TO: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager *MPM*
FROM: Jessica Bellah, Community Planner
DATE: April 18, 2016
RE: Staff Review Greenbelt Station South Core DSP-04081-09 Revision

Background

Woodlawn Development Group (WDG), the site developer for the Greenbelt Station South Core project, is requesting a revision to Detailed Site Plan (DSP) 04081, known as Phase 1 and 2. The requested revision would amend the current housing permit trigger associated with construction of the public stream valley trail system along Indian Creek and extend the review timeframe for recreational amenities. The Planning Board originally approved the resolution¹ for DSP-04081 with a finding that the Stream Valley Trail be completed prior to the issuance of the 250th building permit. This trigger was further codified in the Private Recreational Facilities Agreement.

This case will be reviewed at the Planning Board level. The request was submitted by the applicant and accepted by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) on March 24, 2016. No Planning Board hearing date has been set at this time, although it is anticipated that the hearing will be scheduled for early June, 2016. City Council received a cursory briefing on this item at their March 21, 2016 work session.

Certain portions of the Stream Valley Trail alignment traverse State owned land. Prior to construction, an easement must be granted by the State and accepted by the City of Greenbelt. The trail consists of one creek crossing as well as sections of trail and a boardwalk through wetland areas which require permits from the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) and Soil Conservation District (SCD). Staff finds that the applicant has pursued design and implementation of the trail in a reasonable period of time and is currently subject to review and approval timeframes outside of their direct control.

The existing trigger permit limit would require the Stream Valley Trail be fully constructed prior to the issuance of the 251st building permit. At this time city records show that 213 building permits have been issued for Greenbelt Station. Staff estimates that County records are higher for permits which have been issued but not yet pulled at the City. In essence, the current trigger in the DSP would result in a halt of townhome construction at Greenbelt Station for an unknown amount of time until easements and permits for the Stream Valley Trail are approved.

It is staff's opinion that the requested revision is justified. However, staff recommends the proposal submitted by Woodlawn be altered to protect the interests of the City and allow for

¹ PGCPB No. 06-149 was adopted on July 13, 2006

a reasonable period of time to complete necessary State, County, and City approvals. Staff recommends approval with conditions.

Requested Revisions and Staff Comments

The applicant requests the following amendments:

- 1) The Stream Valley Trail shall be fully bonded by issuance of the 250th building permit.
- 2) Construction of the Stream Valley Trail to be completed prior to the issuance of the 352nd building permit.

Staff is in agreement with the recommended revision as it relates to bonding the trail at issuance of the 250th building permit. Staff is concerned that a revision of the construction trigger to issuance of the 352nd building permit is too great an extension. Phase 1 of the Greenbelt Station project, which consists of all homes east of Greenbelt Station Parkway, consists of 342 total approved dwelling units. The Verde apartment complex represents three additional building permits.

It is Staff's opinion that the Stream Valley Trail should be completed prior to completion of Phase 1 which will occur at the 345th building permit². Staff strongly recommends that construction of townhomes in Phase 3 of the development not commence until all recreational facilities in Phase 1 are complete. Therefore, staff recommends the new building permit trigger be set at 300 building permits.

M-NCPPC staff has also indicated concern that the proposed new permit trigger is too high a building permit number and has included City staff's recommendation of the 300th building permit in their initial correspondence with WDG. M-NCPPC staff has also indicated that they are recommending the developer install signs at each entrance of the trail so that current and future home buyers are aware of the location and expected timeframe for construction of the trail. Staff agrees that this additional condition is well considered. City staff has requested the language of this additional condition be altered to provide the City oversight of the creation and installation of this signage.

Staff Recommendation

The applicant has proposed revisions to the findings of DSP-04081 and proposed new conditions governing construction of the Stream Valley Trail. Staff concurs with the need for these revisions but is concerned that the new proposed trigger is not adequately tied to the existing development sequence of Greenbelt Station. Staff concurs with the language and conditions proposed by M-NCPPC staff with some alterations.

² This number incorporates all approved townhomes in Phase 1 and the Verde apartment complex.

Staff recommends approval of the DSP-04081-09 revision, Phase 1 and 2, Greenbelt Station South Core, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Prior to the issuance of the 250th building permit:
 - a. The trail location shall be posted at 200-foot intervals, at all trail access points, and be inspected by the M-NCPPC trails coordinator and the City of Greenbelt.
 - b. The signage shall be approved by the trails coordinator and the City of Greenbelt prior to posting and shall state at a minimum: “future location of a public trail” and the expected date (month and year) of construction completion.
 - c. The signage shall be constructed of durable materials, shall utilize colors that will attract attention, and shall be directed towards the lots of the subdivision and the public street.
 - d. The height of the signage shall be determined by the trails coordinator and the City of Greenbelt in consideration of the site grading to ensure visibility of the signs. This condition may be waived at certain locations by the trail coordinator and with the consent of the City of Greenbelt, at the request of the applicant, if they agree that specific site conditions make the posting unwarranted at certain locations along the proposed trail.
 - e. Maintenance of the signage shall be the responsibility of the developer.
- 2) Prior to the issuance of the 250th building permit:
 - a. The trail shall be fully bonded.
- 3) Prior to the issuance of the 300th building permit:
 - a. The trail shall be fully constructed.